

A sketch for a project concerning art & education
whose main emphasis is on the participation of adults

Underlying the project is the premise that both art and education can be ends in themselves. There will be no 'exams' to 'pass' and no 'qualifications' to be 'won'. The best place to have the project situated is where there are no direct associations with the education system as it is presently institutionalised in schools and colleges. The ideal accomodation to start out from may be something approaching the sort of five apartment council house that exists in Drunchapel and Castlemilk and those other housing schemes of the early 1950's. This is on three levels, ground, first and second floors; it has a front door entrance from the street and a rear door entrance into the back garden. Such a location would allow for a sense of autonomy, where at least three groups might be in progress simultaneously with some degree of comfort and privacy.

At the outset two houses would be set up as far apart from each other as possible, eg. one in the East End of the city and one in the West End (West End as in Drunchapel). But locations such as Castlemilk, Pollok, Blackhill, Barmulloch, Garthamlock, Summerston, Yoker, Milton etc. must also be considered; plus an area such as Govanhill where the Asian community could be catered for particularly. Any future planning should be looking seriously at the possibility of having one house in every like district.

Bearing in mind the underlying premise of the project the objective is a set of semi-independent groups of individuals - from school leaving age upwards - whose motivation is simply the desire to take part, to learn and perhaps create. A team of full-time 'leaders' is therefore not only not needed by the project but in some conflict with its aims. But two or three full-time workers would be required.

There would be no caretaker living on the premises. The keys would be available from some other source; but available such that any of the existing groups would be at liberty to meet at so-called 'unsocial hours', given that those in attendance would be well aware of their social responsibility to the neighbours. Thus, in theory, each house would be available twenty four hours per day, seven days per week, for fifty two

weeks of the year, if so desired by the folk concerned. A minimum quorum, or some other formal criterion, could be worked out for certain contingencies to do with access.

A central office would exist. This need not be located 'centrally'. The project's full-time workers would be based here. Their support of the project would involve the provision of access or the means of access, or advice and discussion on how to acquire the means of access, to such things as video equipment, a computer/word processor, desk-top publishing; theatre props, a small stage; books, gardening tools, recording studios; oils and acrylic paint, musical instruments; stone, wood or metals for sculpting, pottery kilns; in short, the means by which a group of like minded individuals can embark on an educational/aesthetic project. A group of folk interested in, say, making a film based on some historical incident associated with the area they live in, would come together at the house but the actual equipment or expertise needed in the acquisition of such equipment would become available only through the central office, where such items or information would be available for general use. There would be a free interchange of ideas between the different houses and occasional joint projects (eg. magazine/book publishing, play and poetry readings, concerts, film making and so on).

One further role of the full-time worker, aside from the day-to-day organisation of the houses, would lie in the employment of 'consultants' for individual groups. The role of 'consultant' is roughly equivalent to that of 'tutor'/'teacher'/'group-leader'; it is the 'professional', the person who is practised in acting, in film making, in the study of history or Scottish literature, or Indian cookery, or rock/folk/classical music, or contemporary philosophy or the use of knitting machines or Egyptology or novel writing or poetry or modern languages or desk-top publishing or dancing or whatever, to a certain professional standard of proficiency.

Employing the 'professional' on a consultancy basis is as much a liberation for the individual concerned as it is for the project generally since the genuine professional is almost always engaged on his or her own individual work in the field in question. For the project it means that a greater variety of interests can be catered for, as opposed to what would be the case if permanent full-time/part-time teachers, tutors or artists-in-residence were employed. Once the project is underway it is envisaged

that the role of the 'consultant'-might alter significantly. The direct participation of individual consultants would probably never amount to more than two meetings per week for any one house; and in special cases joint house meetings could be called for eg. if any especially important writer/painter/actor was in town for a few days he or she might be prevailed upon to do a couple of workshops (as Dario Fo has done in London and elsewhere). The consultant could also receive payment by way of a basic consultancy fee for each meeting, thus avoiding the various administrative difficulties connected with being a part-time employee of the region.

The foregoing is a sketch only and should be looked upon as the basis for further discussion.

